

Textile Tycoon Swaps Putting Greens for Green Products

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Huang Huade used to play golf every day of the week until he went on a relief mission to China; it changed his life and convinced him that to help others was more important than pleasing himself. He has become a pioneer in manufacturing popular products from re-cycled material.

Huang is chairman of Texma International, a large textile company with factories in the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and Shenzhen and offices in Taipei, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Vietnam. He used to be a golf addict. "He played golf every day," said his wife Li Shi. "There are only seven days in a week but he played for eight. Most people play 18 holes but he would play 36 or 54. He did it all." The evening that changed him was when he went home to find his wife unexpectedly absent. "I was very anxious and wondered if I should call the police," he said. "I did not know what had happened. Unhappiness turned to nervousness and finally I realized that, before, it was always she who was waiting for me. I was filled with a deep sense of shame." That evening, his wife, a Tzu Chi volunteer, was attending a tea party hosted by a friend: "I really wanted to take part because there were people sharing their Tzu Chi experiences," she said. "I went there after work to listen. I was so absorbed and happy that I forgot the time."



The shock persuaded Huang to participate in the first humanitarian mission organized by the foundation in China, after the worst floods of the century in May and June 1991 struck eastern and western regions, destroying the homes of tens of millions of people. To deal with the emergency, the foundation conducted major fund-raising events; [Master Cheng Yen](#) donated to the mission half of the US\$30,000 she received from the Magsaysay Award. With a Shanghai office, Huang was well placed to provide aid, in the form of clothing and blankets. "Once you've touched another person's heart, they'll want to do the same too," he said. "When you visit a village and local people grasp you with their coarse hands and look into your eyes, it is very moving. You feel complete inside. The Master says that your achievements are not based on how successful your business is or how much you earn; instead it is about how much you can do to assist others. If you do it for yourself, it means nothing. If you can accomplish by giving and asking for nothing in return, then you will be free of suffering and accumulate spiritual wealth."

After this profound experience, Huang put away his golf clubs and began to devote time regularly to the foundation. He visited Hualien and met Master Cheng Yen: "I told her that I did not like to read books or study, then it was pointless for me to learn the sutras. Then, she told me not to read, but just to do it." Each Monday morning, he holds a meeting with his employees at Texma to thank them for their hard work and tell them about what the foundation is doing. "You have all been managing your work exceptionally well, so that I can volunteer outside without worrying about the company," he told them. "We should not use petroleum and should

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use recycled goods instead. So what can we do the company? We can think long term, give to society and not harm the earth. Our products will help the planet and preserve its natural resources." To this end, he was one of the founders of the foundation's [Da Ai Technology Company](#), which uses recycled material to make fashionable, functional and eco-friendly garments and other products; this is in line with Tzu Chi's global environmental mission. One of its products, which Huang helped to create, is a blanket made from recycled PET plastic bottles, which the foundation uses in its relief missions.



With more than a decade of experience, Huang Huade is now a veteran philanthropist; he still follows the Master's advice to 'just do it'. Through this charity work, he has gained spiritual enlightenment and happiness and learnt that business does not have to be profit-oriented; instead, it can serve a higher purpose - the greater good for humanity. "We hope eventually to bring some of Tzu Chi's eco-designs into the international market to consumers world-wide. Then everyone will acknowledge and associate Tzu Chi's logo as an eco-friendly brand. This is our mission."

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